

2006 Indiana Deer Season Summary



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General

The 2006 Indiana deer hunting season was comprised of 4 seasons: early archery (1 October-3 December), firearms (18 November-3 December), muzzleloader (9-24 December), and late archery (9 December-7 January). Additionally, there was a youth only season on 23-24 September. This season was open to any youth age 15 years or younger, and accompanied by an adult at least 18 years in age. The youth could take one additional antlerless deer during this special youth hunt season.

The statewide archery bag limit was 2 deer. Hunters could take one deer per license for a total of either a) 2 antlerless deer or b) 1 antlered deer and 1 antlerless deer. A total of only one antlered deer could be taken by any hunter during all statewide seasons combined using archery, firearm, or muzzleloader licenses. This was the 10th year that the crossbow was legal for hunting under an archery license by non-handicapped hunters. The crossbow was eligible for use only during the late archery season and could be used for deer of either sex.

Archers could harvest deer in designated urban zones that did not count towards any other statewide bag limit. Each extra urban zone deer required a separate additional archery license. The archery season in the urban deer zone opened 2 weeks prior to the opening of the early archery season (15 September- 3 December), and continued again into January (9 December-7 January). Archers were allowed to harvest either 4 antlerless or 3 antlerless and 1 antlered during this period. Any deer harvested during this period is in addition to all other bag limits.

The bag limit during firearms was 1 antlered deer and 1 either sex deer during the muzzleloader season (maximum of 1 antlered deer harvested per hunter). A single firearms license was required to hunt with any or all shotgun, muzzleloader, or handgun during the firearms season, and a muzzleloader license (separate from the firearms license) was required to hunt during the muzzleloader season.

The resident deer license fee was \$24.00 and the nonresident fee was \$150.00. When an agricultural advantage could be gained, resident landowners who hunted on land they own were exempt from purchasing deer licenses, as were lessees.

Special public hunts were held at Muscatatuck and Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuges, Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center, and Naval Support Activity-Crane.

Bonus Antlerless Permits

An unlimited number of bonus antlerless permits were available at every deer license vendor statewide, and each permit could be used in any county in the state except Tipton, which no bonus antlerless permits were granted. Permits were available to both resident and non-resident hunters. Each permit was valid for 1 antlerless deer, and

hunters were allowed to take as many bonus antlerless deer as desired, as long as the county antlerless bag limits were observed. This varied from the 2005 season, where hunters were limited to a maximum of 4 antlerless deer, with an additional 4 antlerless deer allowed in each of the 13 deer reduction counties. Bonus antlerless permits could be used during all deer hunting seasons, and cost was \$24 and \$125 for the first antlerless permit for residents and nonresidents, respectively. The second and each additional permit was \$15 for residents and \$24 for nonresidents.

Number of Deer Harvested

A total of 125,381 deer was legally harvested in Indiana during the 2006 season. This harvest was <1% lower than the 125,526 deer harvested during the 2005 season. The antlered deer harvest of 49,094 represented a 6.5% decrease from the 52,488 harvested last year. The antlerless harvest of 76,287 was 4% greater than the 73,038 harvested in 2005. This is the first year since 2000 that the total deer harvest hasn't increased from the previous hunting season. Approximately 2.3 million deer have been legally harvested during the past 55 deer hunting seasons in Indiana (Figure 1).

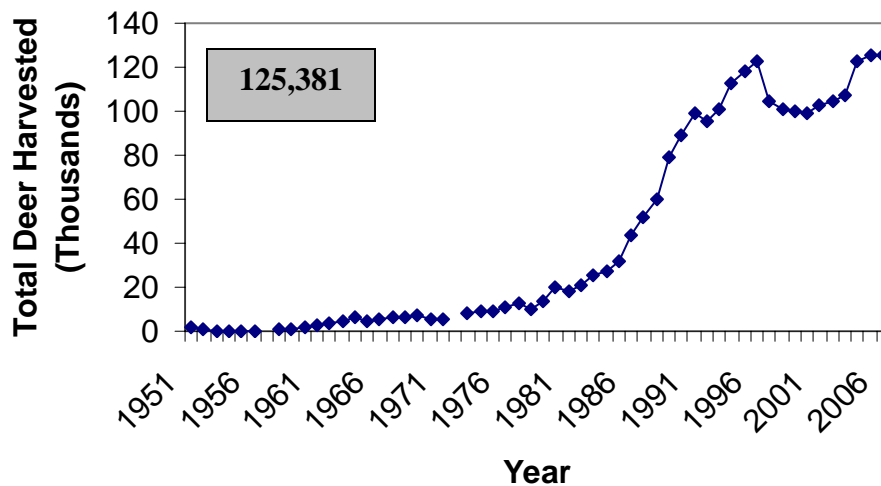


Figure 1. The number of deer harvested in Indiana deer hunting seasons 1951-2006.

The hunting season began with a youth only weekend (23-24 September). This season was new for 2006, and allowed youths 15 years and younger to harvest one antlerless deer. This season resulted in 1% of the total harvest (Table 1).

The early archery season harvest (including the early Urban Deer Zones) of 25,962 deer comprised 21% of the total harvest and was 14% greater than the 22,844 harvested in 2005. The late archery season comprised 1% of the total harvest, similar the 2005 season. The combined archery seasons yielded 27,418 deer, an increase of 13% from the 24,210 harvested in 2005. Antlerless deer comprised 65% of the total archery harvest, a slight increase from the 62% from 2005.

The firearms season harvest of 80,661 deer, which was 5% less than the 84,664 deer harvested in 2005 and comprised 64% of the total harvest. Antlerless harvest (44,566) for this season was nearly identical to the 2005 antlerless harvest, and antlered harvest (36,095) decreased 10% from last year's total of 40,104. Antlerless deer comprised 55% of the firearm season harvest.

The muzzleloader season harvest of 16,127 comprised 13% of the total harvest. This year's muzzleloader harvest was a 3% decrease from the 2005 muzzleloader harvest (16,652). As in years past, a large percentage of the deer harvested during the muzzleloader season were antlerless (79%).

Table 1. Number of deer harvested in each segment of the 2006 Indiana deer hunting season. Percent of total harvest in parentheses (totals may not be exactly 100 due to rounding).

Season	Number of deer harvested		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
Youth season* (23-24 Sept)	0 (0)	1,175 (2)	1,175 (1)
Early Archery** (1 Oct - 3 Dec)	9,390 (19)	16,572 (22)	25,962 (21)
Firearms (18 Nov - Dec 3)	36,095 (74)	44,566 (58)	80,661 (64)
Muzzleloader (9-24 Dec)	3,343 (7)	12,784 (17)	16,127 (13)
Late Archery (9 Dec - 7 Jan)	266 (1)	1,190 (2)	1,456 (1)
Totals	49,094	76,287	125,381

*Antlerless deer season only

**Includes the early Urban Deer Zone starting on 15 Sept

Over 44% of the total firearm season harvest (28% of the statewide total harvest for all seasons) occurred during opening weekend (18-19 November), which is similar to last year (Tables 1 & 2).

Harvest by Equipment Type

Five types of equipment were legal for hunting deer during 2006: bow, shotgun, muzzleloader, handgun, and crossbow. These types of equipment accounted for 21%, 53%, 24%, 1%, and <1% of the total deer harvest respectively (Table 3). Harvest for bow and muzzleloader increased 13% and 2%, respectively, while harvest by shotgun and handgun decreased 5% and 14%, respectively.

Table 2. Number of deer harvested on each day of the 2006 Indiana firearm season (includes deer taken by bow, shotgun, pistol, and muzzleloader).

Date	Day	Antlered		Antlerless		Total	
		N	Daily %	N	Daily %	N	Total %
18 November	Sat	14,011	55	11,243	45	25,254	31
19 November	Sun	5,310	51	5,055	49	10,365	13
20 November	Mon	2,002	45	2,421	55	4,423	5
21 November	Tue	1,648	45	2,005	55	3,653	5
22 November	Wed	1,386	40	2,037	60	3,423	4
23 November	Thu	2,127	43	2,829	57	4,956	6
24 November	Fri	2,273	38	3,684	62	5,957	7
25 November	Sat	2,099	36	3,657	64	5,756	7
26 November	Sun	1,263	37	2,147	63	3,410	4
27 November	Mon	321	34	621	66	942	1
28 November	Tue	321	37	547	63	868	1
29 November	Wed	237	35	443	65	680	1
30 November	Thu	151	35	278	65	429	1
1 December	Fri	233	29	567	71	800	1
2 December	Sat	1,508	28	3,840	72	5,348	7
3 December	Sun	1,236	27	3,384	73	4,620	6
Totals*		36,130		44,754		80,884	

* Totals differ from those in the previous table because date of harvest is not known for some registered deer and this table includes deer from both the firearms season and the last 16 days of the early archery season.

The total crossbow harvest for the year, including deer taken on handicapped hunter crossbow permits, was 721 animals compared with the 520 harvested in 2005. During the late archery season, the crossbow harvest was 130 deer, compared with the 93 in 2005 and the 102 in 2004.

Table 3. Number of deer harvested by type of legal hunting equipment during the 2001-2006 seasons. Approximate percent of total harvest shown in parentheses.

Equipment type	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Bow*	23,765(23)	18,911 (18)	20,748 (19)	21,498 (18)	23,692 (19)	26,723 (21)
Shotgun	59,688 (58)	63,794 (61)	61,674 (58)	71,251 (58)	70,022 (56)	66,304 (53)
Muzzleloader	17,738 (17)	19,711 (19)	22,724 (21)	28,182 (23)	29,686 (24)	30,247 (24)
Handgun	1,562 (2)	1,625 (2)	1,425 (1)	1,620 (1)	1,606 (1)	1,386 (1)
Crossbow						
Handicap	390 (0)	328 (0)	348 (0)	405(0)	427(0)	591 (0)
Late archery	20 (0)	59 (0)	67 (0)	102 (0)	93 (0)	130 (0)
Totals	103,163	104,428	106,986	123,058	125,526	125,381

* Crossbow harvest is not included in bow harvest. Values within this table do not exactly equal those tallied by season (Table 1) due to the fact that multiple equipment types can be used during the firearm season. Muzzleloaders may also be used during both the firearm and muzzleloader season. Additionally, differences arise due to the different methods required to analyze data when either the equipment or the season is unknown.

Harvest by License Status

Licensed resident hunters (lifetime, resident, and youth license holders) accounted for 82% of the total deer harvest (Table 4). Licensed nonresident hunters harvested 2% of the total harvest. Hunters with a regular yearly deer hunting license (resident plus non-resident) took only 43% of the total deer harvest; hunters not paying the full yearly price (i.e. lifetime license holders, youth license holders, landowners/tenants, and military personnel) took 57% of the total harvest. Landowners and lessees who hunted on their own land without a license and military personnel on official leave status accounted for 16% of the total deer harvest. Of the deer harvested by license-exempt hunters, 98% were taken by landowners/tenants and 2% by military personnel on leave.

Harvest Age and Sex Structure

The age and sex structure of the 2006 deer harvest was 39% adult males (antlered bucks), 36% adult females, 11% male fawns (button bucks), and 14% female fawns (Table 5). About 46% of the antlered bucks and 38% of the adult does harvested during 2006 were yearlings (1.5 years old).

Table 4. Harvest distribution of deer by license type during 2006 hunting season.

License Status	Deer Harvested	Percent of Harvest
Resident	51,453	41.0
Lifetime	40,437	32.3
Land Owner	19,540	15.6
Youth	11,179	8.9
Nonresident	2,474	2.0
Military	298	0.2
Total	125,381	100.0

Distribution of the Harvest

The number of deer harvested in individual counties ranged from 82 in Tipton County to 3,287 in Steuben County (Table 6). Harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 62 counties; 2,000 deer in 18 counties; and 3,000 deer in 2 counties. The antlered buck harvest exceeded 1,000 in 4 counties vs. the 7 in 2005, while the antlerless harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 27 counties vs. 25 in 2005. Antlerless deer comprised at least 50% of the total harvest in 89 of the state's 92 counties in 2006 vs. 83 counties in 2005. The only counties not having 50% of the harvest comprised of antlerless deer were Benton, Marion, and Tipton counties.

Table 5. Sex and age structure of the Indiana deer harvest during 1987-2006, as determined from mandatory check stations.

Year	Adults		Fawns		Total
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	
1987	29,530 (57)	11,139 (21)	6,164 (12)	4,945 (10)	51,778
1988	34,358(57)	13,170 (22)	7,050 (12)	5,656 (10)	60,234
1989	40,503 (51)	19,464 (24)	10,737 (14)	8,614 (11)	79,318
1990	43,080 (48)	23,680 (27)	12,373 (14)	9,630 (11)	88,763
1991	41,593 (42)	31,211 (32)	14,626 (15)	11,253 (11)	98,683
1992	43,508 (46)	25,387 (27)	14,262 (15)	12,157 (13)*	95,314
1993	44,424 (44)	27,704 (27)	14,751 (15)	14,335 (14)*	101,214
1994	50,812 (45)	32,466 (29)	15,487 (14)	13,651 (12)*	112,416
1995	47,098 (40)	40,946 (35)	16,398 (14)	13,287 (11)*	117,729
1996	47,315 (38)	39,913 (32)	17,307 (14)	18,551 (15)*	123,086
1997	42,537 (41)	35,163 (34)	14,039 (13)	13,198 (12)*	104,937
1998	44,955 (45)	30,711 (31)	12,257 (12)	12,538 (12)*	100,461
1999	46,371 (46)	30,474 (31)	11,645 (12)	11,129 (11)*	99,618
2000	44,621 (45)	31,986 (32)	11,072 (11)	11,046 (11)*	98,725
2001	48,357 (47)	31,806 (31)	11,230 (11)	11,770 (11)*	103,163
2002	47,177 (45)	35,357 (34)	11,291 (11)	10,603 (10)*	104,428
2003	49,533 (46)	36,303 (34)	10,262 (10)	10,887 (10)*	106,986
2004	54,743 (44)	41,749 (34)	12,501 (10)	14,065 (11)*	123,058
2005	52,488 (42)	44,286 (35)	13,030 (10)	15,722 (13)*	125,526
2006	49,097 (39)	45,257 (36)	13,688 (11)	17,339 (14)*	125,381

* Number of adult and fawn females is projected from the % fawns of all females aged at the biological check stations (not from the ratio of fawn doe to fawn bucks in the total deer harvest).

Table 6. Number of deer harvested in each Indiana county during 2006 (after adjustment for unknowns).

Number Harvested				Number Harvested			
County	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	County	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
Adams	221	340	561	Lawrence	858	964	1821
Allen	645	944	1589	Madison	199	350	549
Bartholomew	494	712	1206	Marion	146	125	271
Benton	74	57	131	Marshall	994	1589	2583
Blackford	127	175	302	Martin	727	1107	1834
Boone	178	183	360	Miami	486	762	1248
Brown	655	1030	1685	Monroe	550	822	1372
Carroll	340	547	887	Montgomery	400	588	988
Cass	569	807	1376	Morgan	489	644	1133
Clark	787	1208	1995	Newton	453	591	1043
Clay	365	848	1213	Noble	989	1751	2740
Clinton	136	198	334	Ohio	300	668	968
Crawford	825	1097	1921	Orange	867	1409	2276
Daviess	518	967	1485	Owen	607	753	1360
Dearborn	846	1823	2670	Parke	925	1980	2905
Decatur	194	259	454	Perry	1019	1278	2297
Dekalb	748	1202	1950	Pike	790	1260	2042
Delaware	260	449	709	Porter	518	697	1214
Dubois	682	1236	1917	Posey	673	852	1526
Elkhart	522	832	1354	Pulaski	606	818	1424
Fayette	270	386	656	Putnam	707	1081	1788
Floyd	207	297	504	Randolph	232	286	518
Fountain	526	927	1452	Ripley	662	891	1553
Franklin	945	1821	2766	Rush	145	147	293
Fulton	694	1063	1757	St. Joseph	504	686	1190
Gibson	632	791	1423	Scott	392	702	1094
Grant	272	391	663	Shelby	151	194	345
Greene	808	1331	2139	Spencer	721	883	1604
Hamilton	180	250	430	Starke	587	774	1361
Hancock	106	189	295	Steuben	1187	2101	3287
Harrison	977	1673	2650	Sullivan	670	828	1497
Hendricks	228	300	528	Switzerland	929	1892	2821
Henry	201	310	511	Tippecanoe	556	676	1232
Howard	157	260	417	Tipton	48	34	82
Huntington	449	710	1159	Union	190	296	485
Jackson	744	1303	2047	Vanderburg	353	501	839
Jasper	632	810	1438	Vermillion	412	628	1040
Jay	332	691	1022	Vigo	602	804	1406
Jefferson	806	1389	2195	Wabash	624	738	1362
Jennings	622	1048	1670	Warren	427	593	1020
Johnson	250	408	658	Warrick	745	882	1611
Knox	465	546	1011	Washington	1055	1827	2882
Kosciusko	1129	1954	3083	Wayne	436	507	943
Lagrange	807	1755	2562	Wells	226	280	506
Lake	569	582	1150	White	401	569	970
Laporte	824	1597	2421	Whitley	525	780	1305

* Totals may be off +/- 1 due to rounding during partitioning of harvested deer of unknown sex or county.

